

REMARKS

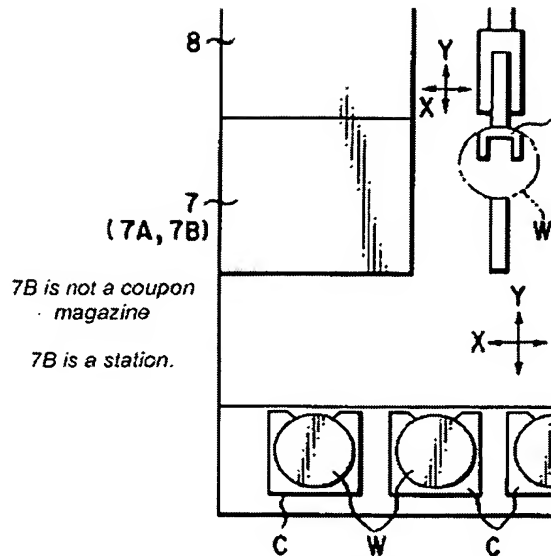
This paper is in response to the Office Action of March 18, 2008. The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of this application. A **Notice of Appeal** is filed along with this response.

Claims 1-8 and 11-15 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated over Taniyama et al. (6,247,479). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Applicants previously amended the claims to more clearly claim aspects of the invention. Specifically, the Applicants have amended claim 1 to define that the docking surface is oriented adjacent to and beside the edge of the substrate. The docking surface is also now defined to be coplanar with the substrate. Further, claim 1 was amended to define the transition interface being spaced apart from the substrate, and the coupon magazine was introduced to define the holding at one side and having the second side extend out to define the transition interface. Based on these defining structural features, it is submitted that the teachings of Taniyama et al. do not anticipate the claims. Similar amendments were made to the other independent claims, so the same comments apply to like elements.

Taniyama et al. teach a system that receives a wafer, where the entire underside is placed on top of the supporting surface 14. The substrate is held, during rotation, by feature 14. The Office points to feature 14 as being analogous to the docking surface. Feature 14 is not a docking surface that has the structure characteristics now claimed. Features 14 are defined to encircle the substrate to hold the substrate during rotation. Aside from feature 14, the remainder of Taniyama et al. teaching is silent as to any structure that can define a docking station.

The Office also points to item 7B, as teaching a coupon magazine for holding a docking station. Item 7B is shown below.



If the docking surface is 13 and 14, as noted by the office, then it is not possible for Item 7B to be a coupon magazine for holding 13 and 14. It is true that 13 and 14 are inside of 7B, but a shaft 12, that allows for rotation is the element that holds 13 and 14. Item 7B is generally depicting item 7 in Figure 2, which can be a station. Then, it is not possible for 7B (alleged to be a coupon magazine), to be holding a docking surface at one end and having a second surface extended to define a transition surface. Indeed, if the Office maintains that items 13 and 14 show a docking surface, then there is no structure in Taniyama et al. that teaches having the second surface extended to define a transition surface.

Additionally, it is noted that if the docking surface is 13 and 14, the claims define orienting the docking surface to be adjacent to and beside an edge of the substrate. Item 13 is a table, and item 14 is a partial support, that does not go all the way around, as noted with reference to Figure 3 of Taniyama et al. As a result, item 13, which is structurally below the wafer is not "adjacent and beside" an edge of the substrate. Taking item 14, as noted in Figure 3 and text, the wafer must "contact" surface 14, so that 14 can support the substrate above item 13.

See col. 6, lines 20-32, reproduced below, for the convenience of the Office:

The process unit 7 has a casing 7a, as shown in FIG. 2. A spin chuck 10, a cup 20 and a process fluid supply mechanism 30 are provided within the casing 7a. The spin chuck 10 has a motor 11, a table 13 and a wafer holder 14. The motor 11 is disposed below the

casing 7a, and its rotary drive shaft 12 is coupled to the lower surface of the table 13. The wafer holder 14 is erected on a peripheral portion of the table 13 and is put in contact with an outer peripheral portion of the wafer W. The wafer W is thus held in the state in which the wafer W is floated above the table 13. A part of the waferholder 14 is cut out to permit transfer of the wafer W, as shown in FIG. 3.

From the above notation, it is evident that Taniyama et al. does not teach the structure now claimed. Still further, to provide the Office with more clarity, the Applicants are reproducing figures from Taniyama et al., which differences in structure vis-à-vis what is claimed herein:

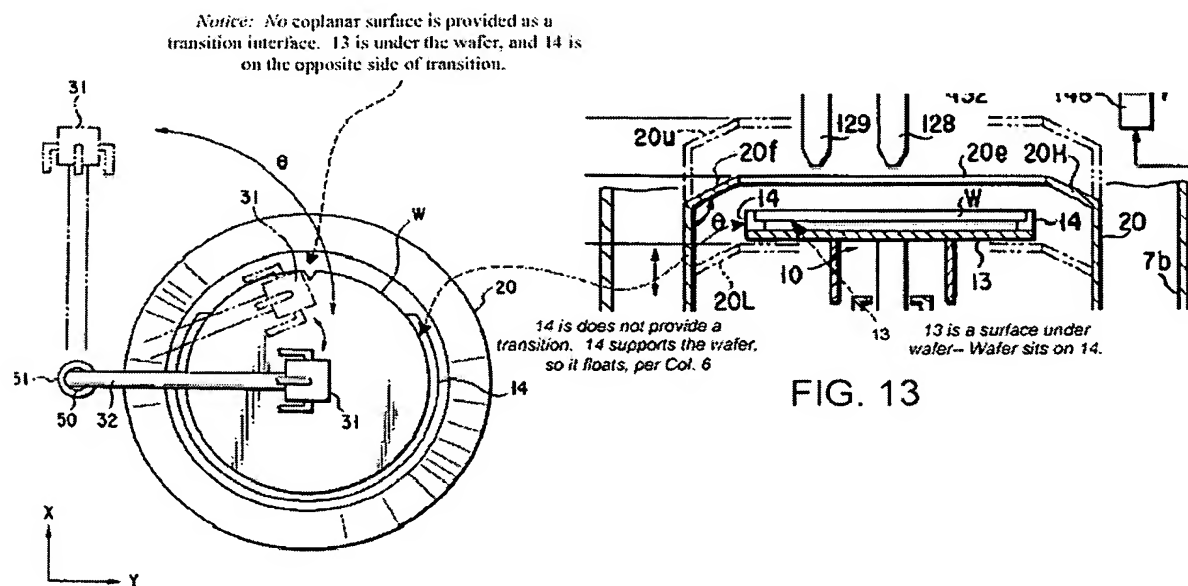


FIG. 3

As noted above, the no coplanar surface is identified for the docking surface. Note that claim 1 defines the docking surface configured to be oriented adjacent to and beside an edge of the substrate. Indeed, even if the docking station is considered 13 or 14, these items are below (item 13) the substrate and provide holding contact (item 14) with the wafer. Support for this is shown in the application as-filed, and in figs. 2b and 2c. Thus, there claim terms are not met. The docking surface is configured to be coplanar with the substrate. No structure illustrating the coplanar orientation is shown. Figure 7, of the as-filed application shows the docking surface 120 being coplanar with the substrate (*see also* Paragraph [0043] of the as-filed application). Thus, support for the coplanar nature is provided. The docking surface also defines a transition interface to allow the fluid meniscus to enter and exit the surface of the substrate.

As noted from the figures of Taniyama et al., even if 14 were the docking surface, it is structurally located at the opposite side of the theta path of 31. Even if it is said that the wafer rotates, the surface 14 will rotate around and around, in a way that surface 14 will in the path theta on and off. As such, the docking surface is not provided as the interface.

For these reasons, the Applicants submit that Taniyama et al. fail to teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Dependent claim 27 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Taniyama et al. As noted above, there is no docking surface shown by Taniyama et al. As such, the Applicants respectfully traverse the Office. Dependent claim 14 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Taniyama et al. and further in view of US 5,305,502. As Taniyama et al. is missing elements, as noted above, it is submitted that the addition of '502 does not cure the lack of teachings for the claimed invention. Dependent claims 9-10 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Taniyama et al. and further in view of 2002/0115024. US 6,162,302 is also cited as rendering claim 10 obvious. As Taniyama et al. is missing elements, as noted above, it is submitted that the additional art does not cure the lack of teachings for the claimed invention. Dependent claims 11 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Taniyama et al. and further in view of 2001/0029150. As Taniyama et al. is missing elements, as noted above, it is submitted that the additional art does not cure the lack of teachings for the claimed invention.

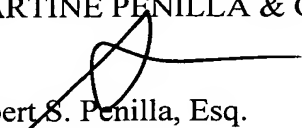
For at least these reasons, the Applicants submit that the remainder of the dependent claims are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons the independent claims are believed to be patentable.

NOTICE OF APPEAL

The Examiner is kindly requested to enter this response into the record, so as to supplement the record on appeal. A Notice of Appeal is hereby filed with this response.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present amendment, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 749-6903. Please charge a one month extension to the deposit account. If any other fees are due in connection with filing this amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No LAM2P474). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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